Service Tax on Telephone

1464. SHRI DHARAM PAL SABHARWAL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that service tax is levied on telephone rentals also by MTNL and BSNL;

(b) if so, the basis on which the same is done when rent is also charged on the instrument;

(c) whether Government have received any representations in the matter opposing such a levy;

(d) if so, the action taken or proposed to be taken thereon; and

(e) since when the service tax on telephone is being levied?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Service tax is levied for the services rendered to the subscribers on gross amount of the bill which includes call charges, installation charges, shifting charges, rental etc. In pursuance of Section 67 of The Central Excise Tariff Act 1885. Rentals are charged from the subscribers for the line connecting his telephone to any exchange within the exchange system and not on the instrument.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) The subscribers who make representations are advised that service tax is payable on total amount of bill as per Section 67 of Central Excise Tariff Act 1885.

(e) Service Tax has been levied since 1994 (chargeable with effect from 1.7.94) as per the statutory provision.

Vidya Vahini Project

†1465. SHRIMATI KUM KUM RAI : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Government-aided Senior Secondary Schools where "Vidya Vahini" project is being carried out to connect through internet;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) the details thereof, State-wise;

(c) if not, the reasons for not starting this project; and

(d) by when this project would be started?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) and (b) The Programme "Vidya Vahini" was conceived by the Department of Information Technology as a pilot project. The project has been implemented in 140 Government/Government-aided schools in the following 7 districts (20 schools per district) in 6 States in the country:

(i) Kuppam (Chittor), Andhra Pradesh

(ii) Gandhi Nagar, Gujarat

(iii) Hazaribagh, Jharkhand

(iv) Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh

(v) Allahabad, Uttar Pradesh

(vi) South 24-Parganas (Kolkata), West Bengal

(vii) Parlivaijnath (Beed), Maharashtra

(c) and (d) Do not arise.

Recruitment rules of TRAI

1466. SHRI M.A.M. RAMASWAMY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India has framed its own Recruitment Rules;

(b) if so, the rules framed with regard to the post of Assistant;

(c) whether it is a fact that some Assistants have been recruited directly by the TRAI from open market whose appointments were summarily rejected by the erstwhile TRAI higher authorities;